

What is Being Done in the Basin Now to Control Nutrient Loads?

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Abstract

Nutrients have been identified as problems in many places in the Mississippi River Basin making them one of the most ubiquitous and complex categories of water pollution. Control efforts tend to be localized and tend to focus on controlling phosphorus, the most important nutrient in freshwater systems. Concerns for nitrogen are found where nitrate's toxicity in drinking water and ammonia's toxicity to fish are noted.

Nutrient concerns are always expressed in their relationship to specific water bodies, and these concerns are seldom seen as issues that affect more than one water body. Examples of projects in the watershed and examples drawn from successful programs in other areas will be cited.

No Manuscript Submitted.

Presentation Discussion

Charles Spooner (Environmental Protection Agency/Office of Water)

Beverly Ethridge (*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Water Quality Division—Baton Rouge, LA*) commented that the Biennial State Water Quality Reports attribute about 60 or 70 percent of the Nation's water pollution to nonpoint sources. She asked Charles Spooner if that percentage is correct, and if the nonpoint source budget is about \$100 million, how it compares to the remainder of the water budget which is presumably targeted for point source control.

Charles Spooner stated that Beverly Ethridge was making the point that the Section 319 Program is relatively small. He said that it was explained early in the conference that one of the reasons they reacted negatively to the Section 319g petition was because the remedy for a Section 319 petition is to invoke controls on the Section 319 Program which would, ultimately, lead to the EPA leveraging a small program within the agency. The major capital funding for the state revolving fund is large. Therefore, it is not difficult to list two states that have construction loan subsidies that would equal the nonpoint source program nationwide. It is encouraging that the rules are allowing greater flexibility to access those funds to support nonpoint source control capital costs.